

Transcript: CKWS Interview With Premier Kathleen Wynne

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*As requested by Kate Moseley-Williams

CKWS INTERVIEW WITH PREMIER KATHLEEN WYNNE

Date: March 6, 2017
Length: 7:50 minutes
Speaker(s): Premier Kathleen Wynne; Mark Ladan, CKWS

MARK LADAN: (Inaudible)

PREMIER KATHLEEN WYNNE: Yeah. The Fair Hydro Plan, yeah.

LADAN: (Inaudible)

PREMIER WYNNE: Well this is not the first thing that we have done, Mark. We have put a number of changes in place going back over a year. You know we renegotiated the Samsung deal. We made a decision on not building new nuclear. We put in place the Ontario Electricity Support Program for low-income families. And then people saw an 8 per cent reduction on their bills in January. So we've actually been making changes to reduce costs in the electricity system, but what I've heard over the last few months, the last six months, is that it's not enough, that there's more that needed to be done, and so we literally have been looking at everything, looking at you know what could we possibly do that would be more fundamental, that would be more structural and would lower people's electricity prices by a substantial amount. And that's where we've landed on the 25 per cent on average; so you know between 23 and 28 per cent, in addition to distribution charge productions for people in more rural communities. So you know it's a substantial change that we're making.

LADAN: (Inaudible)

PREMIER WYNNE: Well what's driving me on this is people not being able to look after their families, look after the kids, meet their family budgets. And so, as I said, we've been looking for some time for the fundamental change that was necessary. We've put together this package, that Fair Hydro Plan, and my hope is that it will ease people's burdens. That's the driver for this change.

LADAN: (Inaudible)

PREMIER WYNNE: Well there are always political considerations you know? I'm in elected office. There are always political considerations no matter where you are in a political mandate. But the reality is that on this issue we've been looking for substantial change, fundamental change, that is going to help people and that's why we've put together this plan.

LADAN: (Inaudible)

PREMIER WYNNE: Yes. So since we came into office under the previous Premier, we've been making investments in the electricity system. We inherited a system that wasn't clean, wasn't reliable and needed to be upgraded, and that's not a partisan comment because it had been Liberal, NDP and

conservative governments who had not made the necessary investments. When we came into office, there was no choice. We had to build transmission lines, we had to build towers, we had to shut down the coal plants, and clean up the air. We've done all of that. We've got a renewable industry in this province. There's been an investment of about \$50 billion in the system to get it to the state that it's in now, which is a clean and renewable grid. But there's a cost associated with that, and that has to be paid off. What we know is that people today – this generation – is being asked to pay a disproportionate amount of that that cost. And so, to your point about a mortgage, we're spreading that cost over a longer period of time; instead of 20 years, over a 30 year period. So yes, today's generation will still have to pay a part of that cost, but so will the next couple of generations who are actually going to use the assets that we have invested in. It's fairer to the people today, and it's fair to the next generation, because they're going to use that asset and have that clean electricity grid.

LADAN: (Inaudible)

PREMIER WYNNE: It's uneven. For some people, it has allowed them to reduce their costs, but the Minister agrees that we need to look at how we can restructure the markets so that people could have different packages. He makes the comparison with your cable package or your cellphone package, that there are choices that would be based on when you would be using the most energy, and what would make the most sense for you. So he's looking at that right now to see if there is a way of changing the system, Mark, so that people would have choice.

LADAN: (Inaudible)

PREMIER WYNNE: Okay, thanks a lot. Take care. Bye.